

Cedar River Instream Flow Commission

Final Minutes

SPU Water Quality Lab

September 5th, 2012

Organizations/Members Present:

- Seattle Public Utilities -- Tom Fox, Rand Little, Karl Burton
 - Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife -- Peggy Miller
 - US Fish and Wildlife Service -- Tim Romanski
 - NOAA Fisheries --Randy McIntosh
 - Muckleshoot Indian Tribe --Holly Coccoli
 - Washington Department of Ecology --Buck Smith
 - Liz Ablow -- Seattle City Light
 - Guest: Ulysses Hillard (SPU)
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- I. Call to Order:** Tom called the meeting to order at 9:40 AM.
- II. Approval of Agenda:** Approved as presented.
- III. Approval of Draft Minutes:** Draft minutes from August's meeting were approved as presented and finalized.
- IV. News and Notes:** Tom mentioned that we are getting close to a record for number of days without measurable precipitation. In response, SPU is working on contingency plans in case the fall rains do not materialize on time. Buck asked about the effort to mobilize the pumps. Tom responded that it takes approximately 45 to 50 days to fully mobilize the floating pumping station, prep the pumps, install the flash boards, connect the pipes and the electricity. Currently, SPU has pumped out the hull of one of the barges and is now detangling the electric cables in the reservoir. The bathometric map is complete and the sill for the flashboards may not be functional, which will likely impede flow and increase the probability of critical flows in the fall. Holly said that the sea lions have been entering fresh water (ship canal and Lake Union) and are also eating lots of salmon down at the locks this year.
- V. Real Time Water Management:**

Hydrologic Conditions for Tolt and Cedar: The region received almost twice the normal precipitation for the month of June. July was slightly drier than

normal. In August, we received no measurable rain and, currently, the only water being released from Chester Morse is through the fish valve. The moraine is contributing significant flows to the lower Cedar although that will decrease as we move further into September. SPU will increase releases as the minimum flow regime requires flows to be ramped up in September and October. The 8-week moving average for flows in the Cedar is above the median. Reservoir elevation is relatively high for this time of year although very similar to last year. The high elevation and the extended time that the reservoir was full this year increased seepage into the moraine and has helped to keep flows up despite the dry weather. Tom expects SPU to be able to continue to meet voluntary flow supplementation levels until September 15th when the regular minimum flow regime ramps up to 136 cfs below the diversion. Estimated unregulated flows have exceeded actual flows since June. All downramping guidelines have been met over the last month. SPU is deploying turbidity meters in Rock Creek to detect any future beaver dam failures to allow operators more time to make adjustments in times when the system is in direct bypass mode. With the new turbidity meters in place, SPU staff will have an additional 2-3 hours to shut down diversion in response to a turbidity event from Rock Creek. Consumption is registering a little bit higher than last year but still well below the maximum allowable diversion in the City/Muckleshoot Agreement.

Lake Washington: Lynne and Larry were not in attendance so there was no update. Tim said that the first pontoons for the 520 bridge had made it through the locks.

Fish Update: Karl reported that the first fall spawner survey had been completed. He and Aaron Bosworth from WDFW counted 20 sockeye and no Chinook on August 30th. So far there have been 60 sockeye above Landsburg and one Chinook. Landsburg crews expect to be in sorting mode soon after Labor Day.

Weather: The short term forecast calls for warm temperatures and no foreseeable precipitation for the next 15 days. Tom reminded the group that this is supposed to be an El Nino year but as long as inflows stay above the 75 percentile level, water demand should be met. However, if we dip below that level, it will be problematic. Fall rains can sometimes come late in El Nino years but usually just one to two weeks late.

VI. Supplemental Studies

Accretion Flow Study: Ulysses Hillard (SPU) presented an analysis of accretion flows in the Cedar. The results indicated that the assumed accretion flows in the HCP were acceptable and further study is not needed. Holly asked whether the decreasing trend had to do with wells and impervious surfaces in the basin. Ulysses said that it could be having some influence but the same

trend in decreasing inflows is also observed in the watershed where wells and impervious surfaces would not be influencing flow. The IFC agreed that further study of accretion flow in the Cedar to address concerns about the HCP was not necessary. The IFC agreed to discuss reallocation of the accretion flow study funding at the next meeting.

VII. Oct. 3rd IFC Meeting:

- 1) Prioritize Peak Flow AMP objectives/monitoring tasks
- 2) Decision on Accretion Flow Study funding reallocation

VIII. Meeting adjourned at 1:00 PM